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SPOKE

"Keeping Conestoga College connected"

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28th Year — No. 21

Kitchener, Ontario

June 3, 1996

Ferocious feline



Three-year-old Daniel Brohman of Cambridge keeps a watchful eye on Katzi the Clown while getting his face painted at the St. Jacobs Farmers Market on May 25.

(Photo by Barbara Walden)

Early retirement re-opened to employees

By Paul Tuns

Conestoga College re-opened the early-leave/early-retirement package for several weeks so the college can take advantage of much needed savings.

In an interview Kevin Mullan, vice-president of finance and administration, said the re-opening of the buyout is necessary to make up for an \$800,000 gap in the budget from where the college is now, to where it has to go, because of funding cuts.

Mullan said the college expects there is still some staff interested because there have been recent inquiries. He said he also expects some people are having sec-

ond thoughts now that some of their colleagues are gone.

"Before the next round of reductions," Mullan said, "we want to make sure everybody has a chance to leave that wants to."

Further staff cuts are necessary Mullan said, because four out of five dollars the college spends is on staff salaries and benefits.

Also, a system-wide survey indicates Conestoga has the lowest expenditures in non-staff items, indicating little potential for savings.

Conversely, Conestoga has one of the highest salary and benefit expenditures of colleges in the province.

Mullan said every non-salary expenditure has been looked at, from room-cleaning schedules to class supplies to administration processes. Many new programs have been initiated already.

Offices, for instance, will no longer be cleaned daily. Classrooms will continue to be cleaned daily, but Mullan said enforcement of no eating and drinking rules is an issue that must be addressed.

Mullan said people eating in classrooms cost \$7000-8000 a year in extra cleanup costs. He said administration must work with the DSA and faculty to enforce existing policies on this matter.

Another issue that must be further examined is photocopying. Mullan said the

college photocopies 12 million sheets of paper a year at a cost of about 3 cents a sheet. The issue is complex, he said, because it involves the behavioral patterns of teachers.

He said it would be unfair to come in and tell instructors they can no longer photocopy as much if that is a large part of their teaching style.

Mullan said he expects to present the final budget to the board of governors in July. He said administration is about 80 per cent through the process, but "reducing the last dollars are much harder than the first dollars." He said the last dollars cut will have much greater operational implications.

Incidental fees to increase as well

Tuition will cost 15 per cent more in September

By Jason Seeds

The cost of attending Conestoga will increase for the third consecutive year starting in September. Tuition will be going up 15 per cent, which for most courses, will mean a \$166 increase to \$1275 from \$1109 per year. Betty Martin, associate registrar for Conestoga College, said the provincial government decides what colleges will charge.

The school has little to do with the decision, she said.

Martin, however, said she thinks it is a good idea that some of the increase will go back to the students. "I'm pleased that we will have money to give back to stu-

dents who need it."

Of the 15 per cent raise, the provincial government has mandated that 10 per cent must go back to cash-strapped students. The province will set up guidelines as to how this money will be disbursed sometime this summer.

Elizabeth John, a second-year micro-computer programming student, said an increase in tuition, no matter where the money goes, will deter people from getting an education.

"People will hesitate before going to school," she said. "People will think twice now, and some will no doubt continue with their unskilled jobs. Why can't they get the money from somewhere

else?"

Colleges will be getting less money to run programs this year than the previous two. For the last two years the province has allowed a 10 per cent raise in tuition, but without any stipulations. Colleges could use the money as they saw fit. This year, colleges will have five per cent more money for programs.

Conestoga's director of finance, Laura Eaglesham, said incidental fees such as athletics and alumni will be going up three per cent. The alumni fee, which gives membership to all Conestoga grads, will be \$24.75 for the year, while athletics, which covers intramural and extramural sports costs, will be \$33.

Eaglesham said the DSA must agree with any increase in incidental fees, and the Board of Governors can decide whether to collect the DSA fee on behalf of the school. "It is a safeguard in case the DSA has been financially irresponsible." The Board of Governors has never voted against the DSA.

The DSA's activity fee will remain at \$54.50, as will the capital development fee at \$20 for this year, but the prescription drug plan will go up from \$55.62 to \$60.59 for a full year. Irene Da Rosa, director of finance for DSA, said the insurance company, Seaboard Life, is not collecting enough to cover what students claim.

Foreman guilty of first-degree murder

By Patrick Moore

Rory Foreman apologized in a Hamilton courtroom Thursday for killing Joan Heimbecker, just moments after being found guilty of her first-degree murder.

"I'd like to apologize to Mr. and Mrs. Heimbecker and their daughter, Donna, for what I have done," he said. "It was a selfish, cruel and cowardly act on my part."

Foreman stared at the floor during his apology. "There was a life I took and I am sorry for what I

have done," he said.

Judge Paul Philp sentenced Foreman to the mandatory sentence of life in prison with no eligibility for automatic parole for 25 years.

The seven-man, five-woman jury deliberated for about 12 hours over two days. The jury deliberated until 10:30 p.m. May 22, but took only minutes the next day to come to their verdict.

Earlier in the trial, Foreman pleaded guilty to manslaughter in connection with the death of Heimbecker, but prosecutors

rejected the plea.

Foreman's lawyer maintained during the trial that Foreman, while being "materially involved" in the murder, had never meant to kill Heimbecker.

"You only hurt the ones you love."

Rory Foreman, convicted killer

Heimbecker, 25, was killed at her student residence at McMaster University on March 30, 1994, by four shotgun blasts.

Foreman eluded police for several weeks before finally turning himself in to United States authorities.

The court had also heard from a variety of experts, including the ambulance attendants who arrived first on the murder scene and a firearms expert, who testified Foreman had most likely "sawed off" the barrel to the shotgun that killed Heimbecker in order to make it more concealable.

Heimbecker was a physical education student at McMaster

and had earned an honors degree at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Heimbecker's parents were not at the courthouse to hear the verdict, but Donna, Heimbecker's sister, was.

Defence lawyer Peter Bawden, speaking outside the courtroom, said he believed Foreman's apology to be sincere.

"I don't think he ever really expected to be acquitted," he said.

"I guess it's true on my part," Foreman told the court. "You only hurt the ones you love."



THE BAND PLAYS ON - Bagpipe players parade through Victoria Park during Westmount Rotary Club's duck race May 26. The event raised an estimated

\$80,000 for the Rotary Children's Centre. About 5,000 people attended the event, which lasted most of the afternoon. (Photo by Peter Marval)

Doon hosts convocation

Four Conestoga graduation ceremonies to be held in June

By Eric Whitfield

About 2,700 Conestoga College students will graduate in four ceremonies on June 24 and 25.

John Sawicki, Conestoga's public relations officer, said there are 2,700 potential graduates who were mailed notice packages about the ceremonies.

On June 24, at 4 p.m. students in the health sciences and community services program will have their ceremony at which Jim Estill, president of EMJ Data Systems, in Guelph, will be the guest speaker.

At 7:30 p.m., on June 24, Tom Jenkins, president of Open Text Corporation in Waterloo, will speak to graduates of the engineering technology program and the trades and apprenticeships program.

On June 25, at 4 p.m., students from applied arts, college access and preparatory studies, continuing education and training and development will graduate. Speaking during their ceremony, Sawicki said, will be Lenna Bradburn, chief of Guelph police services.

The 7:30 ceremony will have Robert Glegg, of Glegg Water Conditioning Systems, speak to the graduates of the business program.



The ceremonies will be held in the gymnasium of the recreation centre at the Doon campus.

There is no admission to the graduation, but graduates are being urged to bring no more than three guests, or there may not be enough seats.

There will be a reception for graduates and guests after each ceremony in the Doon campus cafeteria.

Four major awards, one for faculty and three for students, will be handed out during the ceremonies, Sawicki said. The

programs or departments which the recipients are in will determine when the awards will be distributed.

The Aubrey Hagar Distinguished Teaching Award will be given to the best full-time faculty, said Sawicki.

Student awards will include the Governor General Academic Medal, which Sawicki said will go to the student in a diploma program with the highest average.

Another student award to be presented is the Conestoga College Master Craft Award for an outstanding performance by an individual or group in the technological area.

Additionally, the James W. Church Achievement Award will be given to the student who best combines: academic excellence, social concern and a demonstration of concern for the individual in society.

Sawicki said volunteers are still required for the Tuesday night ceremony. Anyone who wishes to volunteer as an usher should contact Mary-Lynn Dedels, who is the chief usher, at extension 402.

Parking permits will cost more

By Janet White

The college will go ahead with the proposed increase in parking permit rates for the fall, says Kevin Mullan, vice-president of finance and administrative operations, although weekly, daily and meter rates will stay the same.

Mullan said he received a letter of concern about the increase from DSA president April-Dawn Blackwell, which spurned a review of alternative choices, but the final recommendation was to go ahead with the increase. "There has been no increase for two years," Mullan said, "and surveys showed that parking at the college is far cheaper than any college."

Dave Putt, director of physical resources, said he recommended an increase of \$2 for regular-lot permits, and \$3 for designated-lot permits. Putt said he understands objections over the increase, but it is necessary to keep the lots in good shape. "We cannot get grants for parking lots, and if we did not have paid parking, the money would have to come out of academic funding."

Putt said five new parking lots have been added in the last nine years and there are many hidden costs involved in building and maintaining the lots. He said costs

such as lighting, electricity, rain-water retention, plowing and grass cutting are all part of parking expenses.

Rather than keeping the rates the same for many years and then increasing the rates by a large amount in one year, Putt said the more reasonable alternative is a small increase every couple of years. "We do whatever we can to keep the price as stable as possible."

He said the weekly, daily and meter rates will remain the same because the cost of changing ticket machines and parking-meters would be about \$12,000.

Putt said the main projects planned for this summer will be the repair of cracks in lots at Doon campus (including a large crack in Lot 2) and patching at the Guelph and Waterloo campuses.

A new sidewalk will be put in at Doon campus, between Door 5 and Lot 12. Putt said this walkway will be widened to at least two metres, to accommodate the volume of students who use the walkway.

"When that sidewalk was put in, parking lots 11 and 12 were not there. Now we have almost 620 parking spots, with all the people using that walkway, it's just not wide enough."

Providing aid for new beginnings

Conestoga helps immigrants to assimilate

By Robert Klager

Among the thousands of people registered in some capacity at Conestoga College each year are a select few who, when they immigrated to Canada, left behind professional careers as doctors, engineers and technicians in their native countries.

Through a recently developed program called, Technical and English Skills for Professional New Canadians, Conestoga's training and development department assists immigrants with a 19-

week integration into similar and rewarding careers in Canada.

Sandra Schelling, a manager and computer specialist for training and development at the college, says these new 'students' — many of which have recently come from Romania — are coming to Conestoga with an excellent technical base.

"A lot of these people went to university for years and had high-level positions, but when they arrived in Canada, they lacked the current technological requirements and knowledge of cultural

applications that are needed," said Schelling.

What this new program provides them with, she said, are updated technical skills in their fields and a focus on speaking and understanding English. The program runs on an average of three times per year, said Schelling, and accommodates up to 14 professionals at one time in different skill streams, with customized technical training that is partly instructor-centred and delivered partly through interactive multimedia. Over and above the individual-specific training,

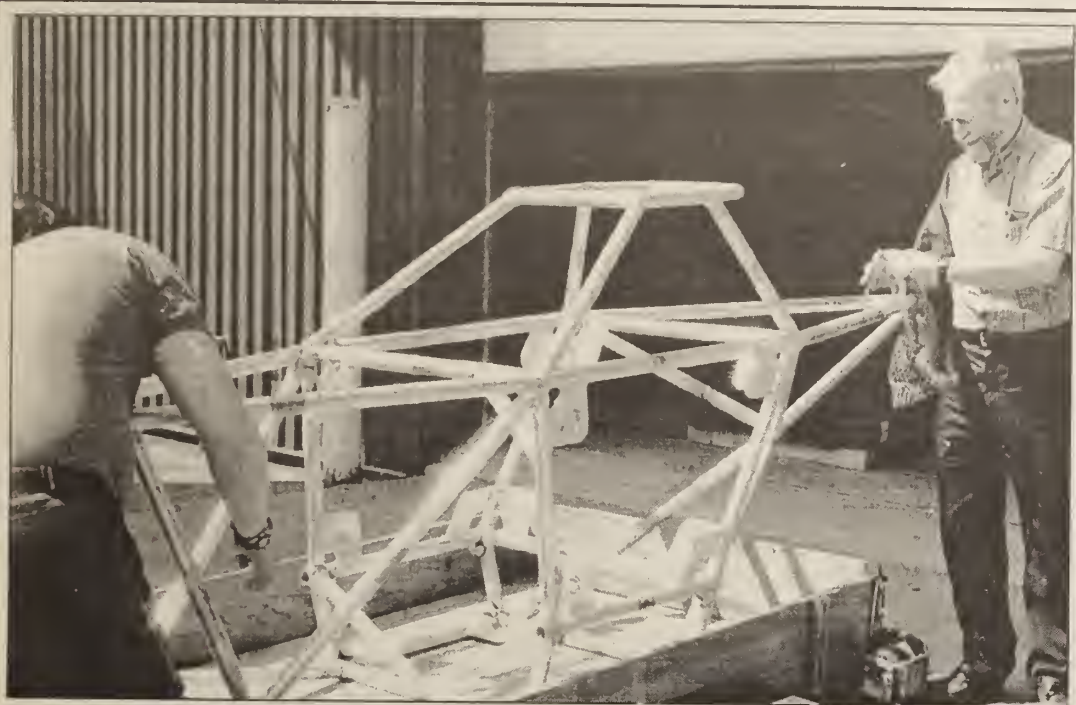
each student receives strong support in acquiring interview and job search skills. After 11 weeks in class, students embark on an eight-week workterm.

"We try to match their past experience with new skills, enabling them to find full-time work that benefits both themselves and their profession," said Schelling.

She said companies are very receptive to the program and the quality of employees it produces. These companies are receiving very skilled employees with a lot of experience, into entry-level

positions," she said. "Many are ending up with excellent jobs."

The training and development program has a standard follow-up procedure with its clients; of the 14 who left the program in February, all but two are working full-time in salaried positions, said Schelling. "These people are very professional and motivated. It's very rewarding to know you're making a difference — that after they've given up everything and often come to Canada alone, you're able to help them get their old jobs back."



Pat Tondreau (right) and Shin Huang unload Spectre, Conestoga's solar car, May 21. The car was at the Guelph campus being welded.

(Photo by Amanda Steffler)

Conestoga's solar car comes home for completion before Sunrayce 1997

By Amanda Steffler

Conestoga College's solar car, Spectre, returned to its home at the Doon campus on May 21.

Spectre was at Conestoga's Guelph campus where it was being welded by Ted Fehr, a second-year engineering technician student.

The car, which was designed by students and is being assembled by a team of about 15 students, will be racing in the solar-powered car race in June 1997.

Shin Huang, project manager for the solar car, said proposals for the solar car had to be submitted before entering the race.

Huang said the proposal for Spectre was chosen as one of the top 30. As a reward for placing in the top 30, Huang said Conestoga will be receiving \$2,000 US. There were 55 entries and a few cars were

entered at the last moment.

The car has to be completed by April 1997, so it can be scrutinized. Huang said this is where the car is checked for things such as safety, structural soundness and whether or not it meets the criteria of the type of solar car running in the race.

Huang said all cars must be at the scrutineering in order to run in the race. If the car does not pass the inspections the first time there is another chance later on, closer to the race date.

Huang said there are qualifying runs before the race. The top 40 teams that complete 160 kilometres in the least amount of time will qualify.

The race, which will last eight days, begins in Indianapolis and finishes in Colorado Springs. Huang said the race begins at 10 a.m. each day, when the cars are let off one at a time, one minute

apart. He said there are stop points for each day of racing. Chase vehicles will be following each solar car and if a team requests, it can also have a lead vehicle.

The winner will be the car that completes the race in the least amount of time from start to finish accumulative. Huang said the Spectre is designed to cruise at approximately 90 km-h. "We estimate that the car will travel at about 110 to 120 km-h at top speed but it will not hold that speed for very long," said Huang.

The team hopes to have the skeleton and electronics done by the fall. The students are planning to spend the months following September completing the aero-shell and the body. Huang said the solar ray will be the last thing to be added to the car.

Conestoga training Toyota employees

By Peter Marval

Toyota of Cambridge will train 30 employees in August at Conestoga College for its expansion, according to the training and development centre at Conestoga College.

The workers, consisting of maintenance personnel, will take part in the multi-skilled maintenance training project, which contains 12 courses designed to meet Toyota's needs.

There are two phases involved in the program. One takes place at the college, teaching students up-to-date skills, while the other takes place at the plant, familiarizing employees with the facilities.

Norm Johnstone, director of the training and development centre, said the employees would become more well-rounded in their jobs and have higher levels of capability.

"Electricians would be trained in mechanical skills, which had not been learned through an

apprenticeship, while a millwright would be trained in electrical skills," he said.

Employees will be using facilities offered in the Student Client Services building, the Detweiler Centre and Festo Didactic, Conestoga's automation technologies training centre on New Dundee Road.

Toyota has been training employees since before the construction of the plant in 1988. The program is paid in full by Toyota, and does not involve any government subsidization.

It runs until October and involves a work load of 30 hours a week.

About 30 employees, who are also part of the expansion group, just graduated in February from the program.

Other companies which also might take advantage of the multi-skill maintenance training program this summer include Hostess/Frito Lay, Lear Seating Canada Ltd. and Canadian General Tower.

Woodworking centre gets a lobby facelift

By Amanda Steffler

Students of second-year architectural mill work, also known as interior woodworking, are helping to create a new look for the woodworking centre's front foyer said Mark Bramer, a faculty member at the woodworking centre.

"The whole foyer was made out of concrete," said Bramer. "We wanted to change the image so that people would see wood right when they entered the building."

Bramer said the efforts to rework the main foyer began about a year and a half ago and have been progressing in stages ever since. He said each year a different set of students work on a new section of the lobby.

For example, last year the bottom half of the walls were finished with wood. This year the students are erecting four pillars and assembling and suspending two display cabinets along the wall opposite to the Conestoga wagon that is on display in the foyer.

The pillars are erected in the

proper places, but they have yet to be covered. Bramer said they are planning to cover the pillars with an exotic wood veneer.

The centre often receives donations of materials from companies for certain projects and Bramer said they are looking for a donation from a company for the exotic wood veneer.

The four by eight cabinets, which are made out of white ash and will have sliding glass doors, are also in the process of being assembled.

Bramer said they are currently being finished in the finishing room. Both cabinets will be installed this summer and will be used to display awards, achievements and student activities.

Plans are being made for projects that will be completed in the future. Some of the projects include more display cabinets, possibly some crown moulding which will trim the ceiling and a completion of the end wall which may include some sort of welcome sign.

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COMMENTARY

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SPOKE

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We must set a better example

Statistics about violent crimes are not levelling off because of the ever-increasing crimes committed by children, most recently, the 14-year-old Burlington boy charged with first-degree murder of his friend and the 11-year-old Toronto boy suspected of raping a 13-year-old girl. These boys committed acts that go far beyond the norms that society accepts for children.

Psychologists blame the television medium for juvenile delinquency, but daytime television could not possibly show and tell an 11-year-old how to engage in sexual intercourse. Moreover, television could not possibly entice the violence of beating one's friend over the head until death. So where on earth did these two learn their evil-doings?

When today's elderly were children, society's only teachers of norms and moral values were family and church. Today school and family direct adolescence.

At some point in these two boys' lives, a bizarre twist must have happened. The parents in these situations obviously did not teach the youths acceptable values nor set the right examples. The Toronto boy's mother herself had run-ins with the police. Educators too must have let these boys slip through the cracks.

On the other hand, maybe the boy's friends were to blame for their inexcusable deeds. But somewhere down the line, someone not something, showed them the wrong way to act in today's society.

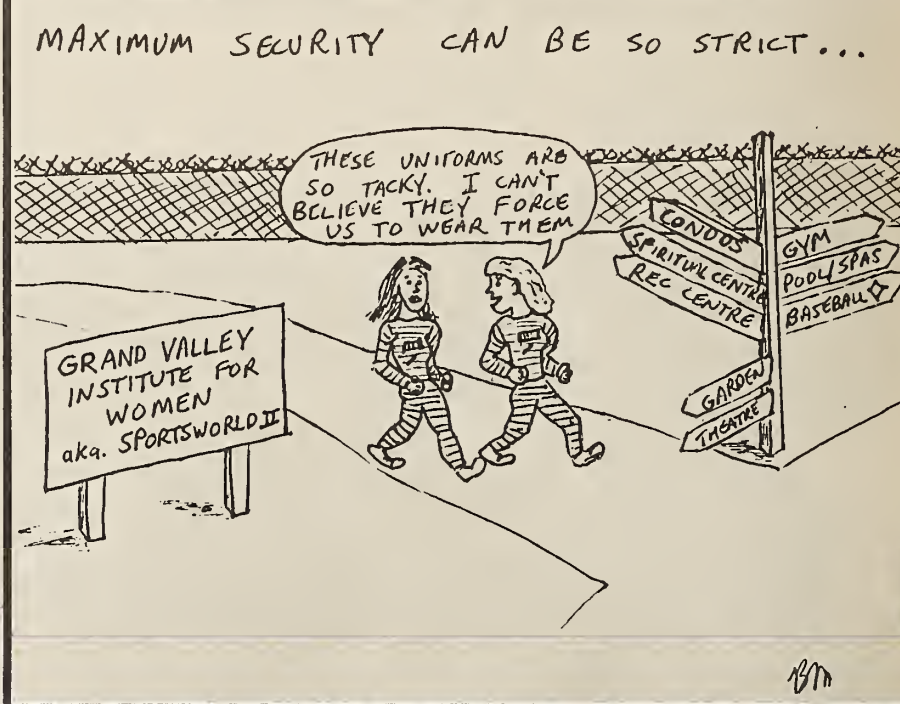
The Young Offenders Act (YOA) was put into place as an answer to the ailing problem of disruptive kids. Strengthening punishments might keep the offenders behind closed doors longer, but it might not necessarily keep them from committing crimes to begin with. Kids over the age of 12 may be charged, however, the long arm of the law cannot touch anyone younger. The 11-year-old rapist knew this and taunted the police with the fact.

Not only should the YOA be changed to include all ages, but police and school counsellors should be given the power to look into the cause of the child's violent acts.

Parents must also do more in looking after their children and getting involved with their children's lives.

Children who rape or murder know what they are doing, but only because someone in their life hasn't taught them that violence isn't an acceptable answer to achieving goals or desires in life.

The masses of society must set more of an example towards today's youth. They must teach what is acceptable in life and make clear the consequences of any wrong doing down the road for the victim, the victim's family and the offender.



Now, let the whining commence

By Paul Tuns

The motto of the average Canadian seems to be "life is so unfair." For many, life becomes unfair when it fails to meet our expectations. But the sound of middle-class North Americans complaining is sickening — we have never had it better.

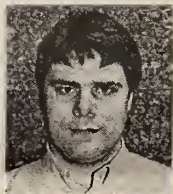
Christopher Hitchens, writing in *Vanity Fair*, writes, "In the 50 years since the first boomer uttered the first wail, the wailing has never stopped."

Polls indicate nearly half of Canadians think they are worse off than their parents were at the same age and 62 per cent think the next generation will be worse. This is ridiculous. Peter Shawn Taylor writes in *Saturday Night* that Canadians are the "wealthiest, most comfortable people in history."

Robert J. Samuelson illustrates how Americans are better off than ever before in his recently-released *The Good Life and Its Discontents*: house sizes are getting larger, people own more televisions, telephones, radios, cars, and they have more leisure time and education. Incomes might be falling, but workers are receiving more benefits and (generally) lighter workloads.

Could it be that we have unrealistically high expectations? Or are we in a spiritual and moral crisis for which material goods cannot compensate?

Perhaps it is a bit of both, but likely much more of the latter. The "national funk" as U.S. President Bill Clinton calls it (former president Jimmy Carter called it a malaise), is part of the culture, of what author Charles Sykes calls a nation of



victims — victims of the "unfair" world in which we live.

The idea of responsibility has disappeared as victimhood reaps rewards, absolving individuals of responsibility. But assuming a permanent position of grievance is ridiculous.

Feminist writer Catherine MacKinnon complains bitterly about being silenced. She is a University of Michigan law professor, has books published by Harvard University Press and is one of the most sought after speakers on the university lecture circuit. Most writers would sell their soul to the devil to be as silenced. (They would also immediately complain about that sale.)

Another American professor complains that he is a victim of a terrible injustice, a bigotry so awful that he began to hate himself. The injustice is motorism, the prejudice of car drivers against bicycle drivers on highways.

Masters students at a New York university (and undergraduates here in Ontario) complain about an extra \$200 in tuition. One wonders how much they value their education if they cannot find an additional \$17 a month for a masters degree.

On television, a student wearing a leather jacket and sporting nice jewelry, complains that she does not have enough money to make ends meet.

It seems the right to complain is an entitlement widely exercised and enjoyed by Canadians. We have been raised to believe every desire should be satiated. The American journalist George Will writes that North Americans live in a "culture that begins with the idea that the good life consists in satisfying every impulse." That must change before we whine ourselves to death.

Clinton's nose got my attention

By Barbara Walden



Blame it on the demise of the Cold War, or the lull between the presidential campaigns and the upcoming American election, but lately there's been a decided lack of real news drifting our way from south of the border.

A recent story in the United States news section of the local daily newspaper gave me more details than I'll ever care to know about the U.S. president.

One of the first things a journalist learns in school is to make sure a headline's a grabber, one that compels the reader to pay attention to the accompanying story. "Clinton has growth removed from nose during checkup," did the trick for me on this story. I thought I had to know more.

It seems that President Clinton had just had his annual physical in a three-hour testing session at Bethesda Naval Hospital and his doctor reported he is in excellent health for a man his age.

But that wasn't all, the Associated Press thought we should be privy to all the other juicy details about Clinton's health. He had that pre-cancerous lesion, which was likely caused by too much sun, burned from the tip of his nose. And it wasn't the first time this happened to him either, but the reader was assured that Clinton has learned he needs to apply a

heavy sun-block on his sensitive skin and red face.

We were given all the facts and figures on this six-foot-two-inch, 216-pound man's blood-pressure and pulse readings, which, by the way, were excellent.

But best of all, his cholesterol count was down. This was surprising, we were told, considering the meal of wings, ribs, meatballs, steak, hash browns and apple pie that Clinton gorged on the day before, during a lunch with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

And on it went, recanting details of his severe heartburn problems and his desire to lose some weight (no small wonder when inhaling meals like the one above).

This kind of article might interest U.S. voters, but why the heck are we Canadians being subjected to this amount of detail?

Why the heck did I even read it?

We have a lot more exciting stuff going on here in Canada to fill our news pages than stooping to reporting on our fearless leader's blood pressure or dining habits.

Besides, we don't need all the gory details to know that a prime minister who can bare-handedly capture a burglar in his bedroom, or apply a half-Nelson to wrestle down a protester, is in great physical shape.

Although at times his pulse must race just a little, we sure don't need, or want, to read about it.



COMMENTARY

Youths need more time for crime

By Patrick Moore



In late May, a 13-year-old girl was held captive by a gang of boys and raped by their 11-year-old leader.

She had met the boy the day before and agreed to walk home with him the next day. Little did she know, the boy's 13- and 15-year-old cronies would tear her clothes off and hold her down while the 11-year-old performed this ultimate violation.

And what is this little tyke's punishment? Nothing.

According to the Young Offenders Act (YOA), the boy rapist cannot even be charged, despite having admitted to the crime. Only children ages 12 and up, can be charged with a criminal offence under the Act.

In fact, he boasted to frustrated police that he knew he was immune to the law when committing the crime.

Instead, the boy was remanded to the custody of the Children's Aid Society, where he will undoubtedly talk out all of his "problems" to a counsellor in some comfy room.

The boy's mother says the boy is a victim. He has already been tried and convicted in the media, she says; the media should not judge the boy, as only a court can do that.

The problem is, this boy will never see the inside of a courtroom for committing this terrible crime.

Because of the YOA, this boy has literally escaped the system despite having committed a savage rape. The emotional and physical scars left on this poor 13-year-old girl will last much longer than her attacker's counselling sessions with the Children's Aid Society.

A criminal cannot have it both ways. Either go to court and face vindication or castigation, or shut up and take your medicine.

Laws are created so society can function

without tearing itself apart through dissent. Since society is an ever-changing organism, so must be society's system of laws.

Thirty years ago, there were no computers and no computer crimes. Today, the laws run thick with black ink on computer fraud, theft and various other crimes not even conceived of in an earlier day.

Laws governing our youth should have evolved as well. Like it or not, crime is knocking on our children's doors and some of them are answering it with a smile.

Youth crime has been on a dramatic rise over the last 15 years, yet our laws governing youth crimes have remained static or just plain goofy, as in the case of the YOA.

The answer, as always, is simple: scrap the Young Offenders Act and come up with something more responsive to the needs of our modern society.

Adult time for adult crime — it's the only way.

Working for welfare

By Linda Reilly



David Tsubouchi, minister of health and welfare, has had the courage to do what no other politician would do: implement work for welfare — workfare.

Welfare was meant to be a temporary thing, not a lifestyle.

Unfortunately, many recipients are outraged at having to now work for what was once a free handout. Some feel it is their right, not a privilege, to receive a monthly cheque.

If these complainers put as much time and effort into finding a job as they do about being forced to work and the indignity of it all, they might actually be successful in their job search.

A lot of taxpayers have reached zero tolerance, especially after one long-term recipient termed welfare, "cash-for-life."

Before the cuts, there was no incentive for recipients to get off their butts and work, because in many cases, welfare netted considerably more than a job would.

The rates were too generous and this discouraged recipients from finding work.

After Tsubouchi cut welfare payments by a whopping 21.6 per cent, a lot of former welfare recipients are now getting off their butts — where sentimentalists have put them — and they are retaining or taking minimum wage jobs. They are taking charge of their lives and are on their way to becoming productive citizens once again.

Not all welfare recipients are against workfare. Many people are only on welfare as a temporary measure and really do want to work. Workfare will provide them with an opportunity to get back in the workforce. As one recipient said, it will give them back their dignity and it may even lead to a permanent job.

Tsubouchi was serious when he told municipalities that workfare is not an option and if they refuse to participate in the program, their welfare funding will be discontinued.

Will he follow through? You bet!!

Sports: where retiring means see you later

By Diane Santos



The dictionary defines retirement as the act of withdrawing from one's occupation, so why is the definition of no relevance to professional athletes. The latest athlete to retire is Irvin 'Magic' Johnson.

Johnson retired from professional basketball in November 1991, after being diagnosed as HIV positive.

Johnson returned to the game and the Los Angeles Lakers in January 1996, but now, he has once again retired.

In a statement released by his agent, Johnson said it was time to move on, and furthermore, he was retiring.

On the other hand, Johnson's exit has opened the door for a new pro-athlete. But one problem remains ... retirement doesn't mean your dead when it comes to the sports world.

If the truth be known, when it comes to

professional sports, retirement means the chance to recoup for awhile, take a vacation and try your hand at something else, but it doesn't seem to mean you've withdrawn from your job permanently.

Michael Jordan, from the Chicago Bulls, is another example of a sports icon retiring and returning to the sport. In the summer of 1993, Jordan's father was shot and killed.

Shortly after his father's death, Jordan retired from basketball and started playing with the Chicago White Sox's baseball farm team.

Although he retired from basketball and then went on to play baseball, his absence from the court wasn't a long one. Jordan came out of retirement near the end of the 1994 - 1995 season, and joined his teammates back on the court in Chicago.

Lastly, there is boxer George Foreman. After being retired for numerous years, Foreman came back with a vengeance and went on to claim the heavyweight

title from Evander Holyfield in 1994.

Whether its money or the love for the sport, athletes are given control over situations that an ordinary citizen would not have.

When a business person retires, he or she usually leaves the company permanently, and either spends the rest of their days relaxing and enjoying themselves, or sometimes they even start up their own business to keep them busy.

But in the world of professional sports, where the average income could be in the millions, athletes come and go as they please, never giving the die-hard fan time to grieve the loss of a sports hero.

Athletes should retire once and only once. In a sport where you're only good when you're young, players should put aside their selfishness for the glory and big bucks, and allow the next great sensation the opportunity to shoot for the gold; give them a chance to show their stuff and make his or her first million.

Youths speak out against youth crime

By Amanda Weber

With the recent reports of young offenders committing more violent crimes, many agree the Young Offenders Act should be revamped to punish offenders for the crimes they commit; many suggest the age should be lowered from 18 to 16.

John Fini, a third year business student at Wilfrid Laurier University, said he thinks the age should be lowered because kids should be mature and responsible enough for their own actions by the time they are 16. "Kids do crazy things, but it's when they do something serious that it becomes a problem," Fini said.

The most recent reports of young offenders committing seriously violent crimes came from the Toronto area, when it was reported a 14-year-old beat another 14-year-old to death and two separate murders were committed by 17-year-olds.

For years now, whenever a youth commits a serious crime, such as murder, the

public has petitioned to get the laws for young offenders changed and each time the government has made no move to do what the public has asked. This has been the case until recently. The government has now begun taking a look at the Young Offenders Act to see what can be done to improve it and prevent the crime from happening.

Elizabeth Lorentz, a first year business student at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, agrees with Fini about 16-year-olds being mature enough to know right from wrong.

"If a 16-year-old commits a serious

crime, they should be charged as an adult," Lorentz said.

Bess McLelland, an OAC student at Sacred Heart High School (SHHS) in Walkerton, also said the act should be changed because kids under 12 take advantage of the system.

"Today, kids can get away with murder," McLelland said. "If they are found guilty, they only have to serve three years."

Kerri McDonald, a Grade 12 student at John Diefenbaker Secondary School (JDSS) in Hanover, Shelby Kueneman, a Grade 12 student at SHHS, and Duane

Lichty, a Grade 12 student at JDSS, all agree the age should be lowered.

"It should be changed when it applies to violent crimes, but petty crimes should be handled the same as now," Kueneman said.

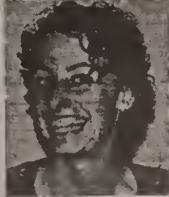
Fini said he thinks violent crimes should be tried in adult court, although the punishment system would be different. The public seems to agree with him; the number of petitions brought forward every year prove this. Maybe the recent crimes will open the eyes of the government and make them produce some results in the fight against crime.



John Fini



Elizabeth Lorentz



Bess McLelland



Kerri McDonald



Shelby Kueneman



Duane Lichty

Starting at the bottom has its benefits, says grad

By Deborah Everest-Hill

Business graduates expecting to land a high-paying job right away should be prepared to start at the bottom, pay their dues, and the high salaries will come later, a graduate says.

Pétra Bayley, a graduate of business administration marketing, was recently hired by Woolworth's as a management trainee for its Northern Reflections store at Conestoga Mall in Waterloo.

She said she is not disappointed with her new job because she had prepared herself for the possibility of beginning at the bottom.

"I knew that I would start at the bottom, do the work and eventually I would get somewhere."

Bayley said only about 15 marketing graduates out of 50 have found employment since leaving school in April. She said the low success rate could

be a result of a poor economy, but it could also be due to a lack of motivation or an unwillingness to take an entry-level job.

Bayley said her pay cheque might not be as impressive as the cheques other graduates are receiving, but she believes her patience will pay off.

She learned about the position at the college's job fair. A number of people seemed interested in the training program and many students dropped off résumés.

After two interviews with managers and a floor interview, Bayley got the job. With no previous experience in retail, she said her degree in marketing opened the door of opportunity.

Bayley credits her ability to get an interview to her initiative. She said she phoned Woolworth's head office and the district manager to express interest in the position.



Pétra Bayley is pleased to be part of the management training program at Northern Reflections.
(Photo by Deborah Everest-Hill)

"Graduates need to keep bugging, if they want a job."

Bayley could be an assistant manager within six months and a manager within the next two years, she said.

If the economy was not an obstacle and she could do anything she wanted, Bayley said she would work in advertising. Despite her present inability to fulfil this goal, she said she is not disappointed.

Bayley said she hopes the management training program will lead her to a position in advertising or purchasing within the company.

Bayley said she likes dealing with people and feels good about the management style at Northern Reflections.

She said she fits in with the relaxed, casual atmosphere of the store because she grew up in Owen Sound.

Robotics projects begins

By Jason Romanko

The third year robotics and automation class, also known as Time 4 Automation, is in the process of designing its final project before graduation.

The goal is to design and build an automated system that will assemble a clock.

Pat Tondreau, faculty co-ordinator of the project, assists the students by obtaining materials, consulting and final evaluation of the project.

"The main purpose of the project is for the students to master tasks and solve problems just like they would face in a typical work situation," Tondreau said.

Colin Turnbull, project leader, said, "A lot of past students have

learned more about industry from the project than from classroom exercises."

The project idea is picked by the class during the fifth semester. The class is broken up into six groups of four to five students, with each group responsible for a project proposal. Each group proposal is outlined to the class and voted on.

A proposal for a saw blade clock won. The clock will be assembled out of used 7 1/4 inch saw blades, a clock motor and a plaque that will be riveted on.

The students must design an automated system that will assemble the clock. The students will apply the theory learned in class, along with their work experience from co-op terms.

In the sixth and final semester, the class splits into six teams, with each team responsible for one aspect of the project. Each team also has a team captain.

Turnbull was voted project leader by the class, and is responsible for keeping teams on schedule and discussing any problems that arise with the teams during weekly meetings with the captains.

"They picked a good leader; he (Turnbull) has all the tools that make up a good leader," Tondreau said.

Funding for the project comes from a number of sources. Tondreau said the majority of the funding comes from donations from industry in the form of equipment and materials.

Distance education is popular with students

By Bruce Manion

With people having other commitments like a family or full-time job, Dave Stewart of continuing education at Conestoga College, says he believes there will be an increasing demand for distance education.

"Distance education is becoming more popular as people who work during the day or are searching for work can complete college courses on their own schedule," said Stewart.

Traditionally, colleges have been slow to hop on the technological bandwagon of distance education compared to universities, said Stewart.

Currently, Conestoga College offers three certificate programs in legal secretary, home office, and computers for a total of 23 distance education courses, which cost the same as regular college courses based on class hours.

The courses operate much like high school correspondence courses with workbooks supplied, and workshop dates arranged where mid-term and final examinations are scheduled.

Comparatively, the University of Guelph currently offers 50 courses in 18 areas of study. According to Jon Oldham, a third-year student at the University of Guelph, most distance education courses operate in a more computerized format.

"Although you do have to schedule a final exam, and possibly a mid-term, most testing can be done on a personal computer and sent to the university computers via modem," he said.

"The computer gives you a certain time limit for each question, so you can't cheat," said Oldham.

Oldham works different full-time shifts and admits that his three distance education courses this spring term have allowed him to work more shifts, since he could complete the course material at his leisure.

Stewart predicts that colleges across Ontario will soon have to offer more distant education courses with computer capabilities because of increased demand for flexible education.

"With the provincial cutbacks, colleges can't afford to keep all their programs and this is forcing colleges to become more specialized," said Stewart.

"Computer courses would allow someone in Sudbury to have no problem taking the fashion design course offered at Sheridan."

Student portraits to reside in the lounge in September

By Allison Dempsey

If life imitates art in any way, by September the Sanctuary will have a much brighter, livelier and more liveable look, says April-Dawn Blackwell, DSA president.

Blackwell said 18 student portraits will be mounted on the pillars in the student lounge, each representing a different program at Conestoga College.

"We heard from students the lounge was too sterile, not liveable enough," she said. "We recognized it was all one color, so we wanted to put up a sign or add some colors."

Different ideas have been suggested in the past, including installing brightly colored tiles in the ceiling, or wood panelling around the pillars. An ad placed in Spoke brought woodworking student Cheryl Jonah to the DSA's attention.

Jonah, 23, presented some of her work and came up with the idea of portraying the student

body with individual portraits. Jonah drew randomly from over 300 names, trying to represent each faculty. She also made sure there was a 50-50 gender representation.

"My goal was to be done by the end of April," said Jonah, who has completed 12 paintings so far. "But I had trouble doing the portraits when school got too busy. It was becoming a bit overwhelming."

Blackwell now arranges for the students to come in at a time that suits everyone.

Jonah, who takes approximately two hours to complete each painting, is not being paid for her work, although her supplies are provided by the DSA. The idea for the portraits had to be approved by the board of directors, and \$296.70 was allotted for the work, said Blackwell.

Jonah, who has always been interested in creativity, said, "I think life is art. It is my life's career." She took general art

courses in high school, and apprenticed under a painter in



Cheryl Jonah creates a masterpiece for the student lounge.
(Photo by Allison Dempsey)

Switzerland for six months, but "he didn't really teach me how to paint. You can buy books about perspective, but it's all relative."

Jonah has recently become involved with an artists' co-operative in Guelph, and she also sees more travelling in her future, although it doesn't necessarily inspire her to create. "A lot of painting comes from inside my head, but I really enjoy the experiences I get from travelling."

In her spare time she plays wood percussion instruments and electric guitar with Milk, an all-girl band specializing in "abstract expressionism."

Painting is intuitive, says Jonah; she could never analyze the final product.

"The relationship between myself and the subject influences how each portrait looks," she says.

"The best part of the art is free association — how each person views the finished portrait."

Unique Summer Jobs

Caring for plants can cultivate a life's career

By Allison Dempsey

Karen Williams says she has the best summer job in the world, is "spoiled" by her working conditions, and couldn't imagine being anywhere else. "You know you really love your job when you have to get up at 4 a.m. and you're still happy," she says.

Williams, 25, works in the nursery department at Home Depot in Kitchener, where she often has the 5-10 a.m. shift. She has always loved being outdoors, and says caring for plants is a perfect way to combine her hobby with her job.

Nursery work has also given her a new appreciation for gardening, something which has become a "passion."

"I'm an avid gardener now, but that only happened after I came here," she said. "It opened up a whole new dimension to my life."

Williams said dealing with

plants is both exciting and fulfilling. "Plants depend on you. Someone has to water them. It's better than sitting behind a desk all day."

Helping customers is an important part of the job, and Williams said while some think they know more than her, others really do know more, and love to share their gardening tips with her. "Learning about plants is really a two-way street," she said. "I have yet to meet a cranky gardener."

Her favorite customers are the ones who know nothing about plants, and allow her to lead them around the nursery, sharing flower facts and offering planting suggestions.

Williams plans to make gardening her life's career, and has applied to the five-year landscape architecture program at the University of Guelph.

"Gardening keeps me sane. It's a little world away from everything else, a haven where I can

escape," she said. "At first I thought it was a passing thing, but I'm just as passionate now as I was over a year ago. It will always be part of my life."

Williams said one of the best aspects of her job is the independence she has earned at Home Depot.

She makes up the schedule of her day, because she says she knows what has to be done and her bosses allow her the freedom to work on her own. She has proven herself at work, something which not everyone is able to do.

"There's a lot more responsibility here than at other jobs. I'm working with living things, and living things can die," she said. "A lot of people want to work in this department, but you have to know your stuff and you have to be physically fit. It's not as easy as it looks."

"I wouldn't work anywhere else. How many people get paid to do what they love?"



Karen Williams prepares to water plants at "the best summer job in the world" at the Home Depot Nursery.

(Photo by Allison Dempsey)

Government job not typical summer fare

By Jennifer Broomhead

After five years as a counsellor at a summer camp for children, Patricia Fitzpatrick has found a job that's more suited towards her career goals.

Fitzpatrick, 21, is a third-year student in the University of Waterloo's applied studies co-op program, majoring in anthropology. Originally from Guelph, Fitzpatrick will be living in Sarnia, Ont., this summer, working for Transport Canada in the harbors and ports branch as a divestiture officer.

Fitzpatrick worked at Camp Canterbury Hills in Ancaster, Ont., throughout high school and for her first official work term. During her second and third workterms, she worked as an environment specialist at the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in Hull, Que.

At Transport Canada, Fitzpatrick's tasks are varied. Under the 1995 national marine policy, the harbors and ports department is required to sell off all local and regional ports. As divestiture officer, Fitzpatrick is playing a large role in this process.

The ports are first offered to other federal departments, then the provinces, Fitzpatrick said. If no government body wants the ports, they are

then offered to municipalities and port users.

Fitzpatrick is responsible for creating port information packages to send out to interested parties. She has prepared packages for 13 major sites and seven ferry sites in Ontario.

These days she is busy getting figures together for the financial portfolio, determining the value of each port.

Fitzpatrick said she has learned a lot about Canada's port systems and how they operate. "I've gained a lot of respect for the government in that it has realized that something needs to be done in this department."

She enjoys the business environment at Transport Canada, and said the atmosphere at her previous jobs was more relaxed. Her only problem is not having enough to do.

"My office is very small and the supervisors do a lot of the work themselves without delegating it out," she said. "I could do a lot more if I had the opportunity."

Fitzpatrick's job will be finished in August, but she may return if asked. Although this job has been a learning experience, she said she will be looking for future employment in environmental assessment, a job more suited to her research for her undergraduate thesis.

Digging up the dirt Students brave elements to help environment

By Jennifer Broomhead

They're eaten alive by blackflies, baked by the sun and drowned by the rain for 10 weeks, and yet they go back to the wilds of Northern Ontario summer after summer.

Lori Katona, 20, and Steve Files, 27, are tree-planters with Wilderness Reforestation. In mid-May, they returned to a camp near Chapleau, Ont., to begin working. Katona, a University of Guelph student, is returning for her second season, Files, a graduate of the University of Western Ontario, for his

fifth, his second as a foreman.

A typical day in the life of a planter begins with a 5 a.m. wake-up call. The crews hop into vans and drive to their two-acre lots, where they load up with 23-kilogram bags of trees. They plant for 10 hours, then head back to camp. They work all day, every day, rain or shine.

"You work regardless of the weather," said Files. "There's no such thing as a rain day."

Planting is a detailed process, from making sure roots are separated properly to digging down to the proper soil.

If it's not done properly the

first time, Files said, the foreman will ask the planter to start again.

Katona said she makes from seven to 10 cents for every tree she plants, depending on the land and the type of tree. Since he's a foreman, Files earns a salary, and only plants occasionally, usually as a demonstration.

Planters pay \$22 a day for camp costs, which include food, transportation, and showers. Camp costs are deducted from their earnings at the end of the season.

Katona and Files both said their favorite aspects of tree planting are the wildlife they see (including bears), their nights off and the people they work with.

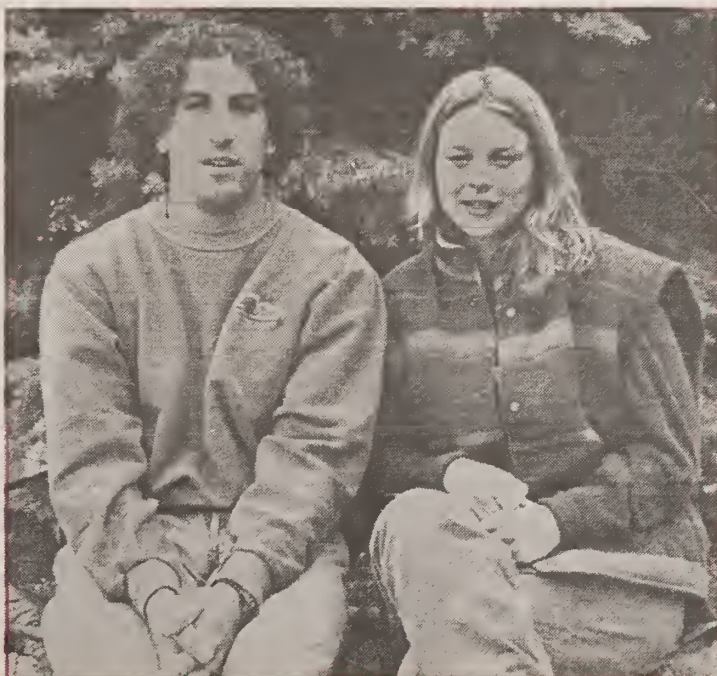
"It gets really lonely out there, when you're planting by yourself all day. You just make really good friendships. They're people that you meet and you get really close really fast," Katona said.

When this season ends, Katona and Files plan to travel to British Columbia to plant trees there.

In the future, Katona said she'll continue planting while in university to earn money for school, but she will move on at some point.

Files said he considers planting a good way to finance travel through the rest of the year, but he doesn't know how long he will work in the field.

"I really don't know what I'm going to do. I'll just take it year by year."



Steve Files and Lori Katona are surrounded by trees where they are working for Wilderness Reforestation.

(Photo by Jennifer Broomhead)

Community walk focused on raising public awareness

By Judith Hemming

The program co-ordinator of ROOF (Reaching Our Outdoor Friends) says she would like the public to try to understand why street youths are on the street in the first place, and she hopes that the agency's 10-kilometre Walk for Community Care will help do that.

Patti Payne, 22, said another thing she would like the public to understand is what the ROOF agency does. "The more informed people are about street youth and their related issues, the less disenfranchised the youth will be."

ROOF's main objectives are to maintain the health and safety of youth while on the street, to offer counselling and referral services to street youth, to educate the public about street youth and to deliver preventative messages to area students.

The walk, which Payne hopes will raise funds and awareness, is scheduled for June 9, from noon to 4 p.m.

The walk will begin at ROOF's new location at 41 Weber St. W, in Kitchener, at the Betty Thompson Youth Centre. ROOF moved to the centre in March of this year from its location on Cedar Street. ROOF itself was founded in 1989.

ROOF has sent letters to service clubs, schools, universities and colleges to recruit participants for the walk. Participants are asked to recruit pledges.

The agency is hoping for a turnout of 100 people, said Payne. This is the first year for the event.

"Really, we want to raise awareness now that we're in this new multi-service agency for youth. And with all these cutbacks happening, it's really important that we let people know who we are, and what we're doing."

Payne has been working with the agency for the last four years, three of which were on a volunteer basis. She said that during the time she has been with the agency, the number of street youths who use the agency has increased.

Payne said the provincial government cuts have affected the agency indirectly. Although ROOF is not a government-funded agency, Payne said the agency still feels the effects of the cuts.

"It's increasing poverty, it's increasing abuse, in whatever form, it's increasing violence and all those of struggles. When all of that comes into play, you're going to have more persons on the street."

Payne said more people on the streets means resources are stretched more thinly. "If you're taking away from families, you're going to have more youth on the street. And if you have more youth on the street, you see the fallout from other agencies that just can't keep up with the numbers."

For more information about the Walk of Community Care, call ROOF at 742-2788.

Annual cleanup Guelph volunteers rally to clean up Speed River

by Diana Loveless

As part of Environment Week '96, OPIRG-Guelph will be holding its 17th Annual Speed River Cleanup, June 8.

In past years, everything from parking metres to staircases have been fished out of the river, said Dave Van Cauwenberghe, cleanup co-ordinator with the Guelph chapter of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group.

Founded in 1976, OPIRG-Guelph is a student-funded organization, located at the University of Guelph, which investigates a variety of social and environmental issues, locally and globally.

Depending on the weather, organizers hope to see as many as 150 volunteers, young and old, sloshing around in hip-waders on the shores of the Speed River.

Clean-up efforts will concentrate on the parts of the river which flow through the urban areas of the city, from Woodlawn Road in the north to Highway 6 in the south. Volunteers will meet at Royal City Park at 9:30 a.m.

As in previous years, the City of Guelph has donated garbage trucks to haul away the waste and has waived the usual tipping fees.

Disposal of waste has become

slightly more complicated this year, with the addition of Guelph's new wet/dry waste separation system.

"We're in a wet/dry community, so we'll have to sort everything," said Bob McCarthy, volunteer co-ordinator at OPIRG-Guelph.

In addition, organizers will have to educate volunteers on the proper handling of hazardous waste, such as syringes, paints, solvents, knives and broken glass.

"We will designate one person in each clean-up group to deal with any hazardous materials," Van Cauwenberghe said.

The Guelph Museum has put McCrae House, on Water Street, at the disposal of the organizers for the post clean-up party. Sponsored by local retailers and businesses, there will be a barbecue lunch, activities for the kids and live music by local band Black Cabbage.

Other Environment Week activities include an environmental bike-a-thon fundraiser, June 2, and a special screening of *Who's Counting: Marilyn Waring on Sex, Lies and Global Economics*, sponsored by the Bookshelf, June 4 and 5.

For more information, contact OPIRG-Guelph at 824-2091.

Raising money for Muscular Dystrophy

Doon Heritage Crossroads hosts Firefighter's Muster

By Blake Ellis

The fourth annual Firefighter's Muster was held at Doon Heritage Crossroads in Kitchener on May 25.

Hundreds of firefighters from 16 fire departments in the Waterloo Region and their families, along with the public, enjoyed the day.

One of the chief organizers, Jim Westwood of the Cambridge fire department, said the event was originally the idea of Terry Allen, who thought it would be good to get all of the fire departments in the region to participate in a day of tactical and sporting events while educating the public on fire safety and prevention.

A mock drunk driving accident was set up by the Kitchener fire department and the public was shown how the fire, police and ambulance departments work together when such an accident occurs.

Westwood said, "Hopefully we can save some lives in the process."

Also, local fire departments tested their abilities in some firefighter games.

In one, a team of six had to fill a barrel on a platform, with water in the least amount of time. A fireman stood at the top of the platform while he was handed buckets of water from a bin of water on the ground.

About 75 ambulances, fire trucks and police vehicles were on display, the oldest being an 1860 horse-drawn engine from the Dunnville fire department.

At 1 p.m. some of the vehicles took part in a parade through the pioneer village.

Admission was free but donations could be made at the gate for the Muscular Dystrophy

Society, and to help equip local fire departments with defibrillators.

Westwood said some rural departments are getting equipped with defibrillators or need to maintain them.

He said he believes this year's events would raise \$4,000, the same amount of funds as last year.



Ralph Mckittrick sits proudly behind his 1923 American La France during the Firefighters Muster at Doon Heritage Crossroads.
(Photo by Deborah Everest-Hill)

Kitchener and Cambridge covered with heritage quilts

By Tara Brown

Cambridge has been graced by the many displays of heritage quilts throughout the city for the last several weeks. Quilting, an activity that originally recycled spare bits of cloth into functional bedding, has now become an artform.

Heritage quilts have been on display in the Galt Library and Gallery, storefronts in the Preston, Galt and Hespeler cores, Southwork Antiques, the Village of Blair and the Cambridge Farmers Market.

Perhaps the best place for their display has been at Doon Heritage Crossroads in Doon, between Kitchener and Cambridge. The centre is made up of several buildings, including private homes, a school, a church and stores preserved from the Waterloo Region's earliest days.

Liz Macnaughton, the researcher for the pioneer village said several of the quilts were on display at some of the houses in the homes including the Peter Martin House, the Sararas House and the MacArthur House. All together about 15 quilts were displayed in rooms very much like the ones they were originally meant for.

"All our quilts are mid-to-late 19th century," said Macnaughton.

Included in the collection is an autographed quilt by church members when Kitchener was still called Berlin. The oldest quilt in the Doon's collection is one dating from England in the 1850s. "It's a patchwork, made up of little square of red, black and white. The material, we're told, came from soldiers' uniforms during the Crimean war," said Macnaughton. Most of the quilts, however, do have local connections.

Quilting is an activity with wide roots in this area.

It is still practised extensively by various quilting groups, like the Cambridge Quilters Guild, and private individuals.

Macnaughton stressed that originally quilting was a very social activity. "People liked to get together, chat and visit while they were doing it. It's a nice way to socialize and get something done all at the same time."



Beth Martin, a member of the Waterloo County Quilters Guild and a volunteer at the Homer Watson Gallery, displays her guild's first prize quilt, the Basket Block Challenge. Quilts will be on display until June 23.
(Photo by Robert Klager)

Scaling tall buildings in a single bound

Guelph students climb to new heights

By Linda Reilly

Scaling city buildings is nothing new for Eric Bitton and Jason McLennen, both 17 and lifelong residents of Guelph.

Bitton attends Centennial high school and McLennen goes to Guelph collegiate vocational institute.

Both students are regular climbers at the Grotto in Guelph.

The Grotto is a place that teaches rock climbing as well as gives people a chance to practice.

Both Bitton and McLennen have been climbing for about a year and a half and have taken lead-climbing courses.

Lead-climbing teaches you to clip on your anchors, (the clip that keeps you attached to the lead rope) as you go, rather than having all your anchors clipped at the start.

Bitton says he climbs because climbing isn't a team sport and there's no real com-



Amikyla Van Stavel of Guelph, scales the outside of the building she owns, prior to its opening. (Photo by Linda Reilly)

petition with anyone else unless you enter competitions.

McLennen, on the other hand, likes to compete. He climbs at least three times a week at the Grotto and works his training into those climbs.

He has competed in New York, Buffalo, Connecticut and a variety of places in Canada.

Last July, in the Pump and Reel Junior Nationals '95, McLennen won four out of five competitions and won first place over all in the 16 and up category.

This year, in March's Walcrow '96, he competed in the men's open and placed seventh.

Although both McLennen and Bitton climb without ropes on a regular basis, they used ropes on May 27, because they were assisting Amikyla Van Stavel.

Van Stavel is the owner-operator of the building on Douglas Street in Guelph that

they were scaling, to get up to the roof on the outside of the building.

Anchoring the ropes to the climber is a safety precaution taken in case the climber falls.

By anchoring the ropes, the climber can be lowered down safely.

This is the second time Van Stavel has used ropes and the first time she has scaled a building. Scaling a building is known as building.

Stavel decided to perform this feat because, once her businesses opens on June 1, she will have no time.

Both Bitton and McLennen, pumped with energy after their building, decided to scale the underside of Heffernan Street Footbridge on Woolwich Street in Guelph. The footbridge crosses the Speed River.

The climb didn't turn out so well. Bitton was left suspended from the footbridge in the middle of the Speed River.

Groundwater festival promotes awareness

By Robert Klager

Thousands of elementary students from across the region and southwestern Ontario were expected to converge on Doon Heritage Crossroads the week of May 27 - June 1, to join in a learning experience that may have left them all wet, but at least more environmentally aware.

In co-operation with The Children's Groundwater Institute, Doon Heritage Crossroads was hosting the Waterloo-Wellington Children's Groundwater Festival, an event the institute's program director, Tanya Splajt, says effectively creates awareness in protection and conservation of groundwater sources.

Splajt, an environmental science graduate of York University, said the institute's purpose is to work closely with community groups and individuals to develop an understanding of the source and importance of water to society and the natural environment. Since 1994, the group — which is primarily privately funded — has formed partnerships with communities through school boards, business and industry and volunteers, to organize festivals promoting groundwater protection, said Splajt.

It's the education link that draws children from grades 4-6 to such

festivals. Splajt said an organizing committee, with school board input, stresses a common curriculum and learning outcome. To coincide with the festival, the institute puts together activity books and resources for teachers to use in classrooms.

"This is the age when these students are studying environmental sciences at public school," said Splajt. "The festival provides hands-on activities that the children can learn from and enjoy."

Splajt said the institute's paced growth ensures the quality of the message it is sending out. "This isn't a festival where kids just come and play," said Splajt. "The activities we provide, while science-based, relate to everyday life and are fun for the children as well." Such activities include working toilets and sinks that display conservation techniques, as well as detailed, working models of groundwater sources and how pollutants can affect them.

The festival was opened to the community on Saturday, allowing more than just elementary students in on the water tips.

"You don't have to be a specialist in environmental science to be conscious," said Splajt. "These activities are all very basic. The visual and colorful effects really enable people, especially kids, to grasp the messages."

Celebrating Greek style with food, fun, and friends

Kitchener-Waterloo participates in 15th annual festival

By Johanna Neufeld

The 15th annual Greek Food Festival was held at Kitchener City Hall on Sunday.

The day-long event which ran from 10 a.m. until 10 p.m., featured music, dancing and traditional Greek food. Members of the Greek Orthodox Community of Kitchener-Waterloo and District along with members of the St. Peter and Paul Greek Orthodox Church in Kitchener volunteered their time.

Master of ceremonies, Chris Bitsakakis, said the festival's format hasn't changed that much over the years.

This year however, the committee decided to move the festival from the Kitchener Farmers Market to city hall. Also, the event used to be held over two days, but it was too hard on the volunteers.

"Attendance for the day would probably be about 10,000 people which is consistent with other years," said Bitsakakis.

Volunteers cooked souvlaki on barbecues close to a beer garden set up in Civic Square, outside City Hall. Food and beverage tickets could be purchased inside. People could choose from souvlaki, gyros, dolmades, tiropita, salads, baclava, melomakarona, and many other dishes.

All of the food except for the pitas is homemade, Bitsakakis said.

Preparations for the event usually start about two to three months in advance.

Traditional and modern dancing was performed throughout the day in the rotunda by the St. Peter and Paul Greek School dancers, Aristotle Greek School Dancers, the Cyprus Brotherhood Dancers and the Pan-Macedonian dancers.

Musical entertainment was provided by a band from Toronto, but Bitsakakis said they usually get a

local band which wasn't available this year.

Donations from the event will go to the St. Peter and Paul Greek Orthodox Church, which recently built a church and purchased a community centre.



Two volunteers keep an eye on the souvlaki cooking, at the 15th annual Greek food festival, on May 26.

(Photo by Johanna Neufeld)

Physically challenged children may lose school

By Peter Marval

The future of Waterloo Region's only school for children with severe physical disorders is in jeopardy after a provincial task force recommended its school board close.

The Rotary Centre school on Hallmark Drive in Waterloo, would see its 57 students, aged four to seven, be absorbed into regular schools if the recommendation was adopted.

The school falls under Section 68 of the Education Act. This allows the creation of school

boards to meet special needs.

The task force, headed by former Kitchener-Wilmot MPP and Liberal cabinet minister John Sweeney, recommended Section 68 school boards be merged with local boards.

Five other schools, located in Toronto, Ottawa, Oshawa, St. Catharines and Windsor, also fall under Section 68 and would be affected by the implementation of the plan.

Each of the six schools is affiliated with and located in a treatment centre for children with developmental problems caused by disor-

ders such as cerebral palsy.

Students spend a year or two in intensive therapy in communication and movement at the special schools to ready them for integration into regular schools.

The schools receive 80 per cent of their funding from the ministry and 20 per cent from local boards.

Harry McCosh, superintendent of instructional services for the Waterloo County board of education, said the children require more one-on-one special care than regular students.

"I don't see how we can be expected to provide similar ser-

vices without the resources for them," he said. "It doesn't seem to me we can do it any cheaper."

McCosh said special programs, similar to those of the Rotary Centre, would have to be set up if the recommendation went through.

Problems could arise, he said, if the children were dispersed over a wide area in the region, causing facilities to be scattered across several schools.

Carol Shantz, Rotary Centre School principal, said the plan is not an effective cost-saving measure since the mandate of the task

force is to reduce school boards in Ontario. The task force, she said, would achieve its objective of closing school boards down, but money would not be saved because special programs would have to be set in motion and would simply replace the cost of the boards.

She has since had local MPPs visit the Rotary Centre to alert them of the dangers of dissolving the board and closing the school down.

The report will be reviewed by Education Minister John Snobelen in the fall.

Local girl raises money and adopts park

By Judith Hemming

It was a sunny Saturday morning when 10-year-old Elizabeth Minett of Waterloo, planted the first tree in her park.

Elizabeth raised money to buy the trees and has adopted the park under the City of Waterloo's Partners in Parks program.

Elizabeth said she just likes trees and wanted to plant them.

"I just really want to help the earth. I think people are polluting too much and too many forests are being cut down."

Elizabeth, a Grade 4 student at the K-W Bilingual school in Waterloo, had come home from school one day in April and told her mother, Nina Minett, that she wanted to collect money so that she could plant trees. She canvassed her neighborhood door-to-door for donations. In total, she collected \$117.15.

Minett said the idea was entirely her daughter's. "She

wanted to do this all by herself. I was not to get involved.

"I'm very happy that she's interested in this, but she's been interested in this all her life. Since she started to walk, she collected toads in the grass when they were only an inch long. This doesn't surprise me. It just fits right in with everything that she loves."

Before moving to Waterloo, the Minetts lived on a 107-acre farm in Elora. Minett said her husband planted 340 of his own trees and 70,000 with the Grand River Conservation Authority.

When Elizabeth contacted the city and told forestry co-ordinator Karen Moyer her plan, Moyer arranged for Elizabeth to adopt Royal Beech Park through the City of Waterloo's Partners in Parks program. Royal Beech Park is near the Minetts' home.

Ed Gacparski, an employee of parks services, accepted the money for the city and brought

50 trees for the group to plant.

Members of the tree-planting party included Elizabeth's friends Emma Bucholtz, 10, Shavone Doherty, 9, Nikki Halliwell, 8, and Alisha Hudda, 9. Elizabeth's father, Charles Minett, and her 13-year-old brother, George, also helped out.

After Elizabeth gave the money to Gacparski, she and her friends looked around the park.

They made plans to clean up garbage in the park and at the mouth of the cement culvert.

"It's disgusting," said Emma.

They also planned to leave a recycling bin in the park to encourage people to recycle their pop cans.

Gacparski said he was impressed with Elizabeth's initiative. "It's fantastic. I'm sure it fosters a lot of respect for the environment. In the future, they can always come back and see how fast things really take hold."



Elizabeth Minett carries a tree during her tree-planting party on Saturday, May 25, in Waterloo's Royal Beech Park.

(Photo by Judith Hemming)

Singing and dancing can be profitable

By T.L. Huffman

Deanna Knight loves to sing. In fact, she does it for a living. But what is different about Knight is that she delivers singing telegrams.

For the past 4 1/2 years, Knight has owned and operated Balloon-a-Toons, a Kitchener business that specializes in decorative balloon displays and singing telegrams.

Knight began delivering singing telegrams after studying musical theatre at Sheridan College. She was working in a balloon store that provided singing telegrams as part of its services when she thought she would

give it a try on her own.

Knight said many of the jobs she does are strange. "I steer clear of stags so I don't have to get into those strange situations."

Instead, Knight goes to events such as birthday parties.

The Cosmic Chicken is her most requested singing telegram. As the chicken, Knight sings the bird dance and gets people to join in and sing, dance and cluck like a chicken.

Another popular telegram, Knight said, is Stella Stork. As the stork, she visits new mothers and their babies, sings lullaby's and cracks a big egg filled with confetti and a message inside.

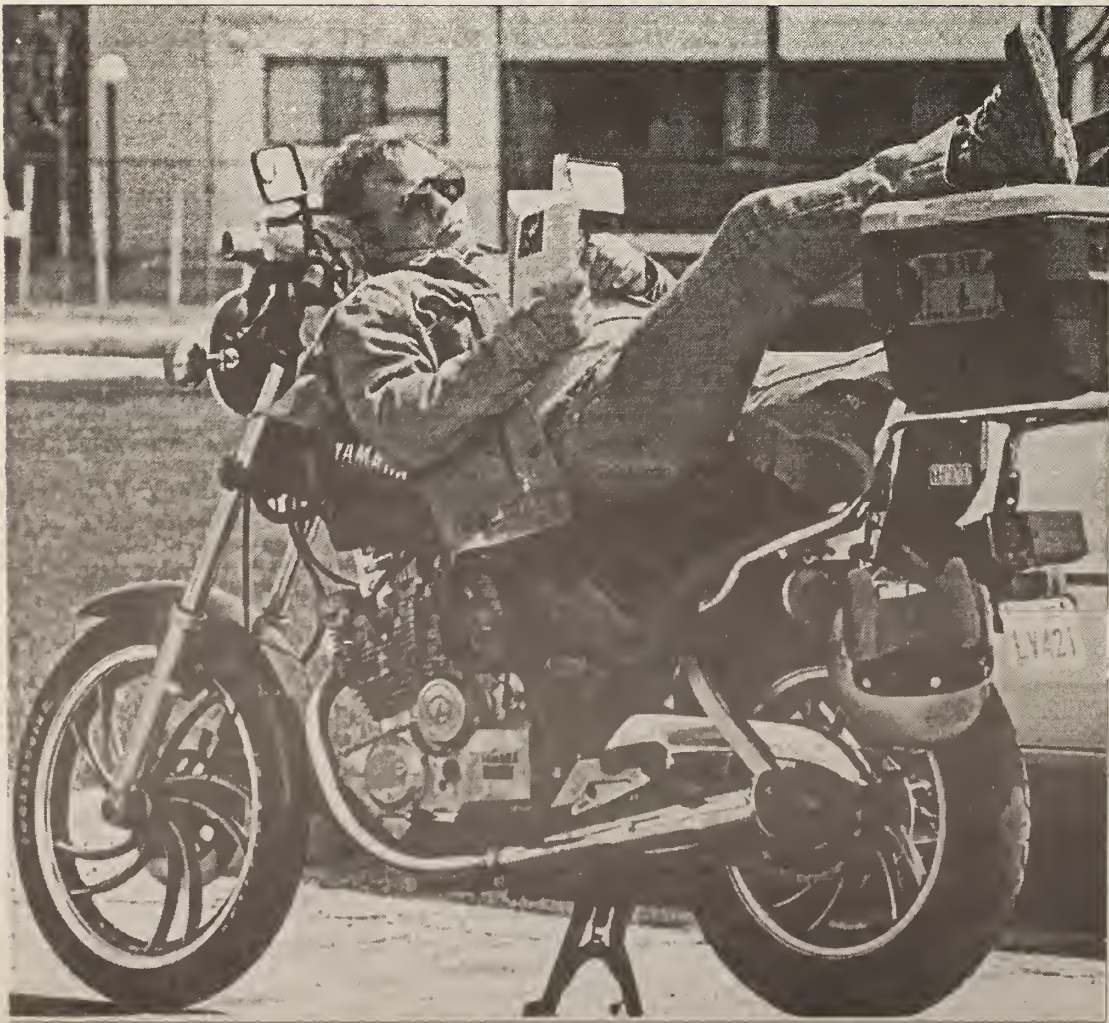
"There's always tears and a video camera going on. That's a lot of fun," said Knight.

Knight's first telegram was Sally the Sassy Singing Sunflower, one that she still continues to deliver. As the sunflower, Knight sings Your Are My Sunshine or You Light Up My Life.

Because Knight does not employ any other singers, she said sometimes it can be difficult to please her customers.

"I often get calls for people wanting Elvis or Tarzan," Knight said.

So she tries to use characters that are asexual like cows and chickens, which please both males and females.



CATCHING SOME RAYS — City of Kitchener school-crossing guard, Jack Ormandy, spends his noon hour on May 27, lounging while waiting for children to cross the intersection of Pioneer Drive and Homer Watson Park. Ormandy says there are often no children to cross at the noon hour and only about a dozen in the morning.

(Photo by Barb Walden)

Anglers, hunters to bear the brunt of cutbacks

By Jason Witzell

Ontario anglers and boaters may have to dig deep in the near future, if they want to continue to enjoy their outdoor recreation.

According to a recent article in the Record by noted outdoors columnist Bill Thompson, the federal government is looking for ways to generate revenue for Great Lakes sea lamprey control, and boaters and anglers are the target.

The federal government recently announced it will be cutting \$1.3 million from its \$4-million commitment to sea lamprey control.

According to the article, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters uncovered internal government documents that outline a number of ways to generate revenue.

One proposal is a \$50 fishing licence and \$1 fishing tags for each fish caught, as well as an additional licence in order to fish waters in different areas of the province.

Another plan suggests boaters pay \$50 to license a small boat and larger boat owners might have to pay \$500 or more in annual fees if the government gets their way.

These types of possible increases have some Kitchener-Waterloo anglers angry at the federal government. The Bridgeport Rod and Gun association already has a petition circulating area tackle and bait shops in the area.

Bud Hoffman, of Markdale

Ont., is a renowned Ontario fly fisherman, who teaches a one day fly fishing course at Conestoga College each spring for the past few years.

Hoffman said the proposal is not fair and does not make sense. "The whole thing about sport fishing, is that in today's financial climate, everybody's struggling to get by. Family fishing has always been an area where people could get out and enjoy themselves and not spend a lot of money," said Hoffman.

Mark Dietrich of Ayr, is an angler and small boat owner, who said the proposal is ridiculous but it will "weed out" the people not serious about sport fishing and who already abuse the current licence system.

Bob Sehwoob owner of Kitchener-Waterloo Fisherman Charters, owns a large fishing boat which he charts on Georgian Bay near Warton. He said the proposed cuts won't hurt his business, but said anglers and boaters won't stand for those kinds of cuts.

"They'll fight this issue," said Sehwoob.

John Burkhardt, manager of Natural Sports in Kitchener, said he is an angler and boater and only gets his boat out a few times a year.

"If I have to pay all this extra cash to get out a few times a year I'm just going to forget it, because it is not worth the hassle," said Burkhardt.

As one angler said about possible fee increases, there is fightin' words."

Cheers-style tavern fixture in Cambridge

By Diane Santos

In a town where businesses can be seen closing just months after opening, the Fiddle and Firkin has been successful in keeping its door open to the residents of Cambridge.

Located on King Street, the Fiddle and Firkin recently celebrated its second anniversary and staff members have high hopes of celebrating more in the coming years.

The Fiddle and Firkin is part of the Firkin franchise, but was the first to open in the Tri-City area. The majority of the Firkin pubs are located in Toronto. At the present time there are 10 located in the province.

The Fiddle and Firkin is decorated like an old English pub, catering to everyone with its variety of theme nights, such as a Beatles night, dart night and trivia night. Saturday evenings the pub has live entertainment, usually consisting of Celtic bands and the occasional old rock n' roll classics.

Gillian Goobie, who has been with the pub since its opening, manages the bar and also waits tables. She says the best thing about working at the Fiddle and Firkin is the people who come and go, "The friendly atmosphere has to be the best thing about working here," she said. "It's just like the television show Cheers. Everyone really does know your name, and the staff is like a close-knit family."

The Fiddle and Firkin is also known for its participation

within the Cambridge community. The pub sponsors both soccer and baseball teams and manages the Preston golf tournament in the summer.

Dave Parker, a regular at the pub, says he enjoys it because of its great location and friendly atmosphere from both staff and customers.

"I work at the Home Hardware across the street and I live around the corner. Even though it may be more expensive to have a beer here, its different than the other bars in town. The atmosphere is better, and there are 14 beers on tap."

The pub is divided into smoking and non-smoking sections. The distinctive barrier, when you enter, is the bar.

The Fiddle and Firkin is open Monday to Saturday, 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. and on Sundays from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Even though last call is now 2 a.m., Goobie said it isn't worth it to stay open. "Usually by last call, everybody is already gone, so instead of us standing around here, we decided not to stay open."

The pub offers a full menu from lunch until dinner, including appetizers and dessert. Its busiest time is Friday.

Jennifer Tell, a waitress at the Fiddle and Firkin, says what she enjoys most at the pub are the stories. "There are different people with new stories and regulars with old stories. Everything always manages to remain relevant. We all get along, both customers and staff. We are truly a family."



RIDING IN STYLE — Maggie (left) and Justyn of Guelph enjoy a wagon ride in the city's Exhibition Park on Monday, May 27.

(Photo by Janet White)

Summer programs starting for kids

By Amanda Weber

The Doon Pioneer Park Community Association will be hosting a number of summer events for children, including a summer playground.

There are three different age groups and four different sites for the playground. Each session runs for 10 days.

Loraine Stassord, the summer co-ordinator at the centre, said the program is offered because a lot of kids have nothing to do for the summer.

The preschool program, which is for three- to five-year-olds, will offer children the opportunity to develop social, physical and creative abilities in a supervised setting. This program handles 16 children.

The junior program, which is for six- to eight-year-olds, will offer the children activities, such as games, songs and crafts. This program is offered to 20 children.

The final program offered is the Adventure Program and it is offered to children ages nine to 11.

The program offers two, three-week sessions and will provide participants with an opportunity to choose and self-direct their summer experience.

The planned events for the session include games, sports, special events and trips. It is offered to 30 youths.

Stassord said the program is run throughout Kitchener and it is good for the kids.

"We try to incorporate nature

and education in the program," Stassord said. "It is an educational opportunity for kids."

All leaders of the sessions are hired and trained by the City of Kitchener's parks and recreation department. The leaders are 15 and older and are certified in emergency level first aid. Stassord said leaders go through a three-day training program before the playground begins.

Registration for all programs will take place at the Doon Pioneer Park Community Centre on June 4, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

All registration money is directed back into the program to provide equipment and supplies for the children.

For further information, contact the centre at 741-2641.

Crisis in Cambridge Animals crowded at Humane Society shelter

By Tara Brown

The Cambridge Humane Society is in a crisis of over-crowding. "That would be a very good word to describe our situation," said Alisa Craddock, a registered veterinarian technician at the animal shelter.

Currently the Humane Society and the city pound, located in the same building, house over 20 dogs and puppies and over 20 cats and kittens, all waiting for adoption into a loving home.

"It's the most crowded we've been in a while," Craddock said. The dogs and cats are housed in clean, brightly lit kennels and cages. The cats range in ages of just old enough to leave their mother to full-grown adults.

The dogs also vary in ages from a few months to maturity. Most of the dogs are of the "Heinz 57" breed and have been surrendered by their owners to the Humane Society.

While most of the dogs have been given to the shelter for adoption, a few of the residents have been taken from abusive homes. "There are days you are frustrated," Craddock said.

You see the condition of the animals that come in here and you feel like you are fighting a losing battle."

Commenting on the hardest part of her job, she said, "Some



Alisa Craddock, a registered veterinary technician, holds one of the many cats available for adoption.

(Photo by Tara Brown)

animals affect you more than others. You know the decision (to euthanize) has to be made but it doesn't make the day easy. It's hard to watch them go, especially when you know what wonderful animals they were."

There are no hard and fast rules regarding the euthanasia of animals at the Cambridge animal shelter. "If we have room, the animal is healthy and there are

no temperament problems, we'll try to keep them," she said. Although staff try to move as many strays from the pound over into the humane society adoption kennels as they can, Craddock admits that it's usually these animals that "lose out in the battle." Lately this situation has been further complicated by the intense crowding in both the adoption and pound kennels.

Art gallery blooms at 40

Celebration mixes fine art and flowers

By Johanna Neufeld

For the 40th anniversary of the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, the Garden Club of Kitchener-Waterloo held its More than Monet show, May 29 to 30.

Committee chairman, Ruth Keith, said the organization was putting on such a show because the art gallery wanted to reach more into the community.

The garden club wanted to get the idea across that art is more than just pictures, which is why they chose the French artist Claude Monet.

Monet was an avid gardener and is well known for his water lily pictures.

The event was "more for the learning experience and it is a good way to learn and keep yourself sharp," Keith said.

From 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., about 75 floral arrangements in the design class were made by many of the club's members.

The arrangements accompanied the art from the gallery's permanent collection.

Most of the works were by Canadians such as Homer Watson, the Group of Seven

and Cornelius Krieghoff.

Both traditional and modern pieces such as an Inuit whalebone sculpture were featured.

Baskets of spring flowers, plants and grapevine wreaths decorated the print corridor and in the Eastman Gallery, where other entries were also displayed.

Cafe Giverny, named after Monet's last home was situated in the Eastman Gallery. Horticultural entries were featured in the Print Gallery.

Lectures and demonstrations in the Rotary Gallery varied as there were sessions about arranging flowers, garden ornamentation, growing herbs, summer entertaining and color in the garden and others.

Established in 1957, the Garden Club which has a membership of about 165 members, holds monthly meetings at the Rink in the Park in Waterloo.

It also gives lectures and flower arranging classes for its members at the University of Waterloo.

A portion of the revenues from the two-day event was donated to the art gallery.



Dominique Charron of Guelph prepares the soil to plant some herbs in her garden on Harrison Avenue, May 25.

(Photo by Diana Loveless)

CD Review

Refusing to sell out, Soundgarden sticks to heavy rock sound

By Scott Nixon

After the breakthrough success of 1994's *Superunknown*, loyal fans wondered if Soundgarden would capitalize on that album's sound and continue to record radio-friendly songs like Black Hole Sun and Fell on Black Days, or stick to their uncompromising grunge roots.

On the band's latest release, *Down On The Upside*, the answer is clear: Soundgarden throws away the eclectic sound of *Superunknown* and sticks, for the most part, to heavy rock.

A constant on every Soundgarden album are singer Chris Cornell's depressing, death obsessed lyrics; on *Down On The Upside*, Cornell lays it on thicker than usual.

On Zero Chance, one of the album's darker songs, Cornell claims to be "Born without a friend/And bound to die alone." He also sees "zero chance of ever turning this around."

On Burden In My Hand, one of the catchiest songs the band has ever recorded, Cornell sings "I hot my love today, would you try for me."

Cornell also says "I need a little sympathy," a rare display of vulnerability; on previous albums, constantly aiming for macho

toughness, Cornell would never make this statement.

Perhaps the album's strongest moment is Blow Up The Outside World, a complex, spooky song that begins with vocals reminiscent of John Lennon on Strawberry Fields Forever or I Am The Walrus and builds to an explosion of rage and violence.

Cornell admits "Nothing seems to kill me no matter how hard I try," but his obsession with suicide isn't as disturbing as Kurt Cobain's was; unlike Cobain, Cornell seems willing to put up a fight.

Not every song is successful. At 66 minutes, the album does feature at least a couple of bad tracks.

Applebite, a nonsensical, nearly instrumental track, sounds like one of Pink Floyd's poorer efforts, and Overfloater is the kind of dreary, slow rocker that would fit better on the band's second album, *Louder Than Live*.

Soundgarden should have progressed past this sound by now.

Down On The Upside does not show the ambition that previous Soundgarden albums have, but that doesn't matter. In a wishy-washy musical sea of Blowfish, it's nice to see some good hard rock still being made. ★★★★★

Video Review

The American President predictable

By T.L. Huffman

New to video-store shelves is *The American President*, a dramatic love story interrupted by politics, or maybe it's a political movie interrupted by romance. Whichever the case, one is hurt by the other.

Highly predictable, *The American President* is a journey of one man's desire to keep his presidency, while fighting to hold on to the woman he loves.

Michael Douglas (*Disclosure*) stars as President Andrew Shepherd. He attempts to show Syd-

ney Ellen Wade, played by Annette Bening (*Love Affair*), that although he is president of the United States, he is a person who has emotions and feelings, just like your average Joe.

Also starring in the movie is Martin Sheen (*Apocalypse Now*) as A.J. MacInerney, the president's right-hand man. Sheen, like Douglas and Bening, delivers a clean performance with great strength.

A predominantly mature cast is interrupted by the not so mature Michael J. Fox (*Back to the Future*). He plays Lewis Roth-

schild, a man working for the president during his campaign. Sadly, it is difficult not to think of Fox as the geeky high school kid from *Family Ties*. So maybe the idea of a short whiny guy arguing about politics worked for the half-hour sitcom, but in a motion picture it comes off as pathetic.

The movie attempts to attract two crowds: one that wants a serious political debate and another that enjoys your typical chic-flick. Now I remember why I waited until it came out on video. ★★★★★

CD Review

Spirit of the West a great change

By Kevin Hansen

In a day and age when the music charts are littered with songs ripped off from the '70s and '80s, and almost completely devoid of new ideas, it was a refreshing experience to hear Spirit of the West's new album, *Open Heart Symphony*, recorded live with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in May 1995.

In the past, other bands have beat Spirit of the West to the idea of playing with an orchestra, but they have fallen short of the mark by simply playing 'best of' albums rather than original compositions. But that wasn't good enough for Spirit of the West, and thus, *Open Heart Symphony* is a new album with 11 new tracks.

Listening to the CD for the first time, it becomes apparent that the orchestra brings more feeling to the music. It is hard to believe that playing with an orchestra isn't more popular.

There are several tracks on the CD which stand out. One of those being Christmas Eve, a traditional Irish song that

makes you want to dance the jig every time you hear it. With it's upbeat fiddle and a crisp flute in the background, this song will brighten up even the most dreary day.

The band couldn't let the chance to slam Preston Manning slip by, and so they wrote Strange Bedfellows, a scathing song about Mr. Manning's deceptiveness. Beautiful violins and trumpets reinforce the mood of the song.

The final track on the CD, Let the Ass Bray, also stabs at somebody, namely Thom of the group Radiohead. Oddly enough, the song speaks directly to Thom who probably isn't too happy right about now.

Let the Ass Bray, is also one of the most beautiful songs on the CD, it flows beautifully with wonderfully orchestrated transitions.

Open Heart Symphony is the ultimate acoustic experience, and in a time when bands are unplugging straight across North America, Spirit of the West has managed to do the same, yet, remain ahead of the crowd. ★★★★★

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